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PIPESTONE, MINNESOTA.

SOURCE OF NATURAL ICE SUPPLY CONTAMINATED.

Dr. H. M. Bracken, secretary of the Minnesota State Board of Health, reported March 15, 1914, as follows:

We were called upon to investigate the ice collected for use at a little city in the southwestern part of Minnesota—Pipestone. Investigation showed that the only near-by ice field for Pipestone is a pond in the course of a creek north of that city.

Dr. A. J. Chesley visited this ice field on March 7, 1914, and found that the sewage from the Indian school near Pipestone was discharged into this small pond. Fresh fecal masses were found at the outlet of the tile drain and there was no filtration between the sewer outlet and the pond. The pond is shallow and covers only a few acres. As a result the ice is not fit for use except for refrigeration.

COMMON SENSE IN PUBLIC-HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.¹

By W. C. RUCKER, Assistant Surgeon General, United States Public Health Service.

The amazing fact of epidemiology is its extreme simplicity. Once the causative organism of a disease is known, and the factors concerned in its dissemination have been determined, the measures to be taken to prevent or to eradicate the disease are relatively simple. It may be stated that the greater our ignorance concerning the cause and method of transmission of a disease, the more complicated are our theories as to its epidemiology. Conversely, once the principles which underly the causation and means of spread of a disease become known, we are amazed by the simplicity of the facts. This has produced a twofold action upon the public-health activities of the present day. In the first place, it has made it possible to reduce the incidence of certain communicable diseases with accuracy and precision. Secondly, it has led large numbers of zealous persons possessed of a few half understood facts to rush into public-health work in its administrative and legislative branches.

In its final analysis, epidemiology is an extremely practical science, and to the mind which has been prepared by proper study and training, it is marvelously easy of application. The technique of prophylactic and eradicated measures is, however, a highly specialized science, which can not be acquired by self-communion and the study of a few text books. The assurance with which the amateur epidemiologist will attack a problem of disease prevention or eradication does not seem in the least amazing to many who would recoil in horror from the thought of an attempted major surgical operation by a

¹ Read before the Chicago Medical Society, Feb. 25, 1914.